

Chair & County Health Officer,

Dr. Charles Stringham

Board Members,

Ken Tipton, County Commission Chair

Marlene Brissenden, County Commissioner

Jim French, County Commissioner

Ron Cerri, County Commissioner

Mike Bell, County Commissioner

Mike Allen, Humboldt County Sheriff

Humboldt County Health Board

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HUMBOLDT COUNTY ENCOURAGES CONTINUED MASK WEARING IN WAKE OF NEW POLICY

WINNEMUCCA, Nev— Beginning Friday, June 26, the Governor is asking residents and visitors to wear a facial covering while in public.

The latest [directive](#) from Governor Steve Sisolak comes after a four-week climb in COVID-19 cases across the state.

Governor Sisolak backed his directive with research done by the Nevada Medical Advisory Team that shows facial coverings are one of the most effective ways to slow transmission of the virus.

Humboldt County Manager Dave Mendiola said Humboldt County residents were quick to adopt mask-wearing practices early on, and he doesn't see that stopping now.

The Mucca Mask Makers, a local mask-sewing group, have made over 6,000 masks available to county residents; other mask supplies have come through local mines, state and federal allocations, and even welding and other businesses.

"We are a mask-wearing community, so this directive from the Governor is really just a reminder for us rather than a new mandate," he said.

Still, Mendiola acknowledged that some residents are not comfortable wearing masks for a variety of medical or personal reasons.

"And that's OK," he said. "Those folks can still be part of the solution by socially distancing and limiting their exposure to large groups of people."

Mendiola said the most important thing in light of the Governor's new policy is common sense. "Try to do the right thing," he said. "Try to protect yourself, your families, your neighbors, your co-workers. We know the things that will help, and that's what we're asking."

Humboldt County Health Officer Charles Stringham, MD, told Health Board members this week that just a few months ago, Humboldt County had the highest concentration of COVID-19 cases in the state.

Now, Humboldt County has one of the lowest concentrations of COVID-19 in the state—a reversal the doctor attributes to residents doing the "right things," like wearing masks.

However, Dr. Stringham said cases are slowly creeping up. “We are potentially ramping up again,” he said, “and we need to make sure we are taking those basic precautions, like wearing masks and socially distancing.”

The Governor’s directive asks residents to wear masks in public places such as restaurants, grocery stores, public transportation and other businesses.

The Governor also is encouraging businesses to ask patrons to follow face covering rules, including covering both the nose and the mouth.

Prior to the Governor’s Wednesday announcement, only employees were required to wear face coverings at all times, although facial coverings for customers were strongly recommended.

The Governor highlighted one [study](#) that showed that social distancing alone, without universal masking, would result in unchecked spread of the virus.

On the other hand, if at least 80 percent of the population were to adopt universal masking, it would result in a substantial reduction in infection; only 50 percent of the population masking would not be sufficient to prevent continued spread.

In addition to facial coverings, Nevada residents and visitors are encouraged to maintain a physical distance of at least six feet at all times; frequent hand washing and hand sanitizer use are also recommended.

“I know we can work together in this effort,” said Mendiola. “I feel strongly that as a united community, and with a good understanding of the role we each play, we can keep our residents safe.”

Free cloth masks are available at the Olsen’s and Ridley’s pharmacies, courtesy of the Mucca Mask Makers, or by messaging the group on Facebook [@Mucca Mask Makers](#).

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